

Amendments to the Claims

1. (currently amended) A magnetic resonance imaging system comprising:
 - a stationary electromagnet;
 - a patient support located adjacent to the electromagnet, the support configured for maintaining a patient in a standing position; and
 - an actuator for raising and lowering the patient support and patient relative to a magnetic field of the electromagnet such that the patient is located within the magnetic field.
2. (original) A magnetic resonance imaging system as defined in claim 1 further including at least one positioning fixture connected with the patient support for maintaining the patient in the standing position.
3. (currently amended) A magnetic resonance imaging system as defined in claim 2 further including at least one secondary coil electromagnet positioned within the magnetic field of the stationary electromagnet.
4. (currently amended) A magnetic resonance imaging system comprising:
 - a stationary electromagnet having a longitudinal axis extending generally vertical;
 - a patient support located adjacent to the electromagnet for maintaining a patient in a seated position; and
 - an actuator for raising and lowering the patient support and patient relative to a magnetic field of the electromagnet such that the patient is located within the magnetic field.
5. (original) A magnetic resonance imaging system as defined in claim 4 further including at least one positioning fixture connected with the patient support for maintaining the patient in the seated position.
6. (currently amended) A magnetic resonance imaging system as defined in claim 5 further including at least one secondary coil electromagnet positioned within the magnetic field of the stationary electromagnet.

7. (currently amended) An apparatus for magnetic resonance imaging of a joint of a patient, the apparatus comprising:

a stationary electromagnet;

a patient support located adjacent to the electromagnet, the support configured for maintaining a patient in a standing position;

at least one positioning fixture connected with the patient support for holding the joint of the patient; and

an actuator for raising and lowering the patient support and patient relative to a magnetic field of the electromagnet such that the joint of the patient is located within the magnetic field.

8. (currently amended) An apparatus as defined in claim 7 further including means for applying a first force to the joint wherein the joint is subjected to a first force.

9. (currently amended) An apparatus as defined in claim 7 further including means for applying a second force to the joint, wherein the joint is subjected to a second force which is greater than the first force.

10. (currently amended) An apparatus for magnetic resonance imaging of a joint of a patient, the apparatus comprising:

a stationary electromagnet having a longitudinal axis extending generally vertical;

a patient support located adjacent to the electromagnet for maintaining a patient in a seated position;

at least one positioning fixture connected with the patient support for holding the joint of the patient; and

an actuator for raising and lowering the patient support and patient relative to a magnetic field of the electromagnet such that the joint of the patient is located within the magnetic field.

11. (currently amended) An apparatus as defined in claim 10 further including means for applying a first force to the joint wherein the joint is subjected to a first force.

12. (currently amended) An apparatus as defined in claim 10 further including means for applying a second force to the joint, wherein the joint is subjected to a second force which is greater than the first force.

13. (currently amended) An apparatus for magnetic resonance imaging of a spine of a patient, the apparatus comprising:

 a stationary electromagnet;

 a patient support located adjacent to the electromagnet, the support configured for maintaining a patient in a standing position;

 at least one positioning fixture connected with the patient support for holding the spine of the patient; and

 an actuator for raising and lowering the patient support and patient relative to a magnetic field of the electromagnet such that the spine of the patient is located within the magnetic field.

14. (currently amended) An apparatus as defined in claim 13 further including means for applying a first force to the spine wherein the spine is subjected to a first force.

15. (currently amended) An apparatus as defined in claim 13 further including means for applying a second force to the spine, wherein the spine is subjected to a second force which is greater than the first force.

16. (currently amended) An apparatus for magnetic resonance imaging of a spine of a patient, the apparatus comprising:

 a stationary electromagnet having a longitudinal axis extending generally vertical;

 a patient support located adjacent to the electromagnet for maintaining a patient in a seated position;

 at least one positioning fixture connected with the patient support for holding the spine of the patient; and

 an actuator for raising and lowering the patient support and patient relative to a magnetic field of the electromagnet such that the spine of the patient is located within the magnetic field.

17. (currently amended) An apparatus as defined in claim 16 further including means for applying a first force to the spine wherein the spine is subjected to a first force.

18. (currently amended) An apparatus as defined in claim 16 further including means for applying a second force to the spine, wherein the spine is subjected to a second force which is greater than the first force.

19. (currently amended) A method for magnetic resonance imaging, the method comprising the steps of:

positioning a patient against a patient support configured for maintaining the patient such that the patient is maintained in a standing position;

moving the patient into a magnetic field of a stationary electromagnet; and
imaging the patient with the electromagnet.

20. (original) A method as defined in claim 19 further including the step of using at least one positioning fixture to maintain the patient in a generally fixed position before imaging the patient with the electromagnet.

21. (currently amended) A method as defined in claim 19 wherein the step of imaging the patient with the electromagnet includes imaging the patient with the stationary electromagnet and a secondary coil electromagnets.

22. (currently amended) A method for magnetic resonance imaging, the method comprising the steps of:

positioning a patient against a patient support such that the patient is maintained in a seated position;

moving the patient into a magnetic field of a stationary electromagnet having a longitudinal axis extending generally vertical; and[,,]

imaging the patient with the electromagnet.

23. (original) A method as defined in claim 22 further including the step of using at least one positioning fixture to maintain the patient in a generally fixed position before imaging the patient with the electromagnet.

24. (currently amended) A method as defined in claim 22 wherein the step of imaging the patient with the electromagnet includes imaging the patient with the stationary electromagnet and a secondary coil electromagnets.